November, 2019

To the Graduate Program:

This project, entitled "Teaching Strategies to Promote Intercultural Dialogues in the ESL/ EFL Classroom" and written by Luis F. Agudelo, is presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

_____
Michelle Plaisance, Advisor

We have reviewed this
Project and recommend its
acceptance

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Accepted for the Graduate Program

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Jane C. Girardi

TEACHING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUES IN THE ESL/ EFL CLASSROOM

Presented to
The Graduate Program
of
Greensboro College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by
Luis F. Agudelo

November 2019

Advisor: Michelle Plaisance

Abstract

This project is based on the growing need to address culturally and linguistically diverse language learners in the classroom. The theory used was the Cultural Dimensions (Hofstede & Pedersen, P., 2002; Livermore, & Soon, 2015; Meyer, 2016). I developed different cards that allow the exploration of different dimensions of culture in the language classroom: Context in communication, accepting feedback, affection, leading, making decisions, trusting, disagreeing, time management, emotions in communication, life management. By reflecting on each of these dimensions of culture, learners and teachers would be able to establish clearer and more effective communication between them. These cards will allow participants to understand how dimensions work in their culture and how they affect people in intercultural communication; learners would map the gap between cultures to understand the breach in each cultural aspect before other cultures. Furthermore, This project encourages language teachers and learners to reflect on cultures interacting in the language classroom to promote cultural awareness. Finally, these cards promote the development of intercultural communicative competence which allows students to have the skill of overcoming prejudices and stereotypes about people from other cultures and be willing to learn from them to enrich their perspective of the world.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my Lord who has allowed me to reach this new step in life, to my lovely wife who always supports me, to my mother in Colombia who guided me into the love for learning, to my sister in Argentina who is a symbol of perseverance, and to my father who would have loved to see me reaching this great goal.

Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1: Introduction

English is not only one of the most spoken languages worldwide but the most studied language around the world. What makes this language highly desirable is the economic and political power that is implicit in the ability to interact in English with other communities. Learning English or any different language as a second language (L2) or as a foreign language are phenomena framed within the complexity of culture. In the United States of America, educators work with students from different cultural backgrounds; in fact, it is one of the most diverse countries in the world. This socio-cultural phenomenon contextualizes the challenges teachers and learners have to face when teaching and learning English. Herrera and Murray (2016) explained that the population of cultural linguistically diverse students and families is about 30 percent of the total, and for 2050, the number may grow up to 50 percent. By the time a child enters the school, they have already accumulated years of knowledge and information mainly from their family. English instructors usually design their courses based on language skills (i.e., vocabulary, grammar, or specific materials). However, the interaction among the second language culture, the target language culture, and any other language culture in an ESL classroom is not the priority. ESL educators are aware of the challenge that represents to teach students from different cultures, in fact, according to Zhang, Y. (2017) in his research, teachers felt confident dealing with intercultural and cultural aspects. ESL educators can recognize themselves there are needs in this respect, however, Intercultural communication and bridging cultures in the ESL classroom represents a challenge for most educators.

On the other hand, it is common that students who learn English within this specific context are exposed to an acculturation process wasting their potential cultural contribution to

the ESL classroom. ESL teachers need to think about language beyond the idea of language as a system of communication or a set of oral and written patterns. Language is loaded with all the history and cultural background that, for centuries, people have contributed to enriching and expanding worldwide, and that should be part of the ESL classroom.

Most English learners learn this language in countries in which their first language is not English. One of the main implications of this is that learners are not in authentic cultural contexts. Then, teachers need to make sure they not only teach grammar but also teach what it means and implies to learn English. ESL teachers need to create suitable and meaningful learning environments. Meyers (2016) stated in "The Cultural Map" that as long as a person builds awareness, he will be better acting as a cultural bridge with others.

As a result, I undertook a project in which I developed interactive cards that educators can use to promote and enhance cultural talks in the ESL classroom. These cards help instructors to map the cultures interacting in their ESL classrooms, and their differences seen throughout English learners' interactions. This resource helps to establish intercultural dialogues in which learners enrich their learning process. Additionally, this project is useful in terms of how to set agreements in a linguistically and culturally diverse ESL class.

This project also seeks to empower students; my hope is that they will be in control of their interaction in the target language by sharing the cultural aspects of their lives. They will have the opportunity to closely monitor the cultural breach when interacting with another person in the classroom with a different cultural background. In other words, this project will help students reach adequate expectations through the understanding of their own culture as well as and other's cultures.

English instructors need to understand their culture is also an asset in the ESL classroom. They have the opportunity to participate with students in intercultural interactions by sharing their cultural perspectives through the materials. These cards also help teachers to set classroom contracts and expectations.

Finally, I believe the material I developed is an effective way to promote not only cultural awareness but respect and appreciation for other cultures. This project considers cultural aspects to enrich the ESL classroom and helps all participants in the ESL classroom. Educators and ELLs actively participate in understanding others' cultural perspectives and what others consider important in their daily lives and when learning English as a second language.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

In this chapter, I review relevant literature related to intercultural communication in ESL classrooms. I provide information related to theory and essential concepts, such as expectations, stereotypes, prejudice, cultural diversity, culture, intercultural communication, intercultural awareness, intercultural competence vs. intercultural communicative competence, intercultural communicative model, cultural mapping, and all the cultural aspects related to it. These concepts and theories are reviewed in light of what research states about them. This chapter also address the importance of the theory mentioned before in the development of the project in order to establish the relevance of intercultural communication in the ESL/EFL classrooms in linguistically diverse learning environments.

Expectations

The video *Cultures of Learning - Vital Features of International Education* by the British Council (2013) explains how educators, learners, and all people involved in educational processes have different expectations about how teachers should teach and how students should learn. The video also highlights that people are usually comfortable with the known approaches to learning. They might feel threatened by unknown or new methods and paradigms; this might also cause adverse effects in the learning process. Thus, it is important to build common cultural aspects of learning to have new ways of teaching and better outcomes. The British Council (2013) suggested that second language learners and educators should be aware of the expectations they have, to avoid prejudices towards attitudes and behaviors that are different

from their owns. They explained how Western educators appreciate participation and punish silence while Eastern students expect teachers to be masters of what they teach.

Prejudice and Stereotypes in the classroom

According to the organization Teaching Tolerance, (2018) stereotypes are exaggerations of a costume, belief, or misrepresentation of a person or a group of people. It is also considered a generalization that does not allow cultural and social diversity. Media, parents, and other valid interlocutors have a crucial role in stereotyping because they help to reinforce generalizations about other cultures (TETO, 2018). It is essential to understand that stereotypes may be positive or negative. Negative stereotypes produce that people who are stigmatized be on guard when having an intercultural dialogue; this might affect their confidence, performance, and limit the opportunities they have to break free from stereotypes. Negative stereotypes may have as a result, other behaviors and attitudes that cause discrimination, prejudices, and inequality (TETO, 2018).

Jackson (2014) explained that ethnocentrism usually has as a result stereotypes. Then, stereotypes occur because of the characterization of people from others' cultural backgrounds in biased ways. The author also explained that stereotypes are also the result of learning processes at an early age that continue in adulthood. These processes influence how one perceives the world and other cultures. Stereotypes might also be the result of fear or ignorance of others' cultural backgrounds (TETO, 2018).

Kubota, R., & Lin, A. M. (2009) pointed out that stereotypes can also be seen in English textbooks, . The authors analyzed how textbooks used in language classrooms have a

predominant stereotypes of white learners and teachers. The authors suggested educators should also be aware of these elements in resources they use in order to not reinforce white stereotypes related to the English learning process.

On the other hand, Teaching Tolerance (2018) explained prejudice as an attitude, behavior, or thoughts about a group of people or about a specific person. Prejudice can also be positive or negative. Usually, prejudices refer to negative behavior or attitudes. This organization explained that prejudices are characterized by the lack of knowledge learners and educators may have about themselves and other people from different social groups. Prejudices are also linked with fear and hostility. According to the analysis made to a study about bias different studies (TETO, 2018), prejudices are caused by psychological processes, these initiate with the devotedness to a specific social circle. However, the experts of this study assured these attitudes and behavior may change, and there are different factors to consider in this process, such as accepting prejudices are learned at an early age; the integration to other communities, and to be committed to change. These elements should be considered within the ESL/EFL classrooms (TETO, 2018).

Cultural Diversity

Baldwin et al. (2006, as cited in Jackson,2014) stated that diversity is a term that covers a variety of cultural differences among individuals and their social groups: ethnicity, gender, age, religion, political trends, different ideologies, etc. The authors also explained this term is applied to refer to sexual orientation, physical characteristics, and national origin. Thus, Baldwin et al

(2006) explained that the ‘surface level’ of this term points at differences that an individual can identify without much effort. On the other hand, the ‘deep level’ of diversity is composed of aspects that are not easy to observe; these include attitudes, beliefs, values, abilities, and knowledge (as cited in Jackson,2014).

Culture

"Universal human capacity" by Levine (1971) is one of the first definitions of culture; it bases culture in human race capacity to do and produce with both cognitive and corporal skills. A more elaborate definition is given by Tylor (1871), who explained culture as a "complex whole" (p.1), an idea that wraps up all the skills and habits learned as a member of society. Agar (2006) stated people who are part of society find out different ways to define their humanity and existence; culture determines the life project of every person; however, it is paradoxical one can learn about himself when reflecting on another culture. According to McDaniel (2009), culture is the frame for those decisions that people make daily and do not need to think about . Berry et al. (2011, as cited in Jackson J., 2014) explained that people judge others based on their perception of the world and their standards.

Culture consists of a complex system of social aspects such as knowledge, arts, religion, politics, and economics that an individual learns during his primary socialization, and that determines how one thinks Tylor (1871). In other words, culture determines the implicit aspects of culture, how a person shapes his values, beliefs, convictions, and his worldview (Kroeber & Kluckhonhn, 1952, p. 181). The implicit aspects of culture would be reflected through the

explicit aspects of culture, making evident how people behave, act and live within the development of their social groups when interacting with other individuals (Agar, 2006; Berry et al., 2011; McDaniel, 2009; Tylor, 1987). This definition is essential to understanding that ELLs bring their culture into the ESL/EFL classroom. Additionally, culture explains and reflects their way of perceiving education and particularly what learning a second language means for them, the way they interact with the world, and how they interact with their peers (British Council, 2013).

Intercultural Communication

To talk about intercultural communication it is imperative to talk about intercultural awareness in the ESL/EFL classroom. *The Common European Framework of Reference* (Little, D., 2011) defines intercultural awareness as the interaction between the learner's perspective of the world and the 'world of the target language community'. It is related to the understanding of the relationship between these two. Intercultural awareness also includes awareness about the social diversity of these two worlds interacting. This intercultural awareness allows students and teachers to have more comprehensive knowledge of cultures and helps them place themselves in context (Kumaravadivelu, B., 2012, p. 96). Intercultural awareness is important to discover communities avoiding stereotypes that students and educators usually have about other cultures. Byram et al. (2002) explained that the essence of IA is to help learners interact with speakers of other languages on similar terms and to be conscious of their identities and the identities of those they are interacting with. The author pointed out that students with this type of awareness

become successful in communicating information and establishing meaningful relationships with people from other cultures. Another important characteristic in cultural awareness is the critical outlook one has about language education that focuses on the relationship between teachers and learners to develop respect for each other when establishing intercultural communication (Byram, 1997)

Intercultural communication is defined as the interchange of information between people of different cultural backgrounds (Berry et al. 2011). For Hua (2011), intercultural communication was more a situation in which people from different cultures come together to interact with one another. Samovar (2010) defined intercultural communication as the interaction between individuals who perceive the world differently because their cultural characterized are different enough to change communication.

Perhaps, most compelling, Lustig and Koester (2010, as cited in Jackson \, 2014) described intercultural communication as "interpersonal communication" (p. 19) between people or groups of people who belong to different cultural communities and that interact in cultural and linguistically diverse environments including different cultural aspects. This concept explains what happens when learners with different cultural backgrounds come together into EFL and ESL classrooms (Damen, 1987). However, in most ESL/EFL classrooms, intercultural dialogues are not intentionally guided and framed within the interaction in the classrooms. These dialogues and types of communication are more given within the "natural interaction" among students and teachers (Damen 1987).

Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence

The Common European Framework of Reference (Little, D., 2011) states that students develop intercultural skills when they can establish a relationship between their culture and the target culture by using different strategies. It also states that students develop these types of competencies when they can deal with misunderstandings and difficult situations with peers and overcoming stereotypes to improve their interpersonal relationships. Tylor (1871) defined intercultural competence as ‘adaptive capacity' that is based on an inclusive perspective of the world that allows an individual to respond to the demands of the host culture adequately. However, it is Byram (2002, as cited in Jackson , 2014), who noticed that many definitions of intercultural competence ignored the ‘language component'. Thus, he made the differentiation between intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence, defining the first concept as the ability one draws on when interacting in their L1with people from other cultures.

On the other hand, Jackson (2014) defined intercultural communicative competence as the skill of interacting across cultures using a second language. Fantini (2000) stated there are three main themes that researchers have characterized related to ICC: the skill of developing and keeping relationships; the skill of communicating effectively and according to the context; and the ability to cooperate with others. According to the author, language and culture are dimensions of one another and cannot be separated and together help people shape how they perceive, interpretive, and think about the world. Jackson (2014) explained that people have different degrees of ICC; there are people ‘interculturally sensitive' who, according to the author, have well-formed ICC skills. These abilities cause people to feel self-confidence and motivation to interact with people from other cultures. People with high levels of ICC are also capable of

dealing with misunderstanding when these arise (Jackson, 2014). Then as Gerard (2013 as cited in TEDx Talks, 2013), it is important that by starting doing simple actions in the ESL/EFL classroom as listening to students and their worldview learned through their own languages, teachers would acknowledge their history, memory, and dignity; they would understand they are an important asset in the classroom.

Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence

In order to structure this project, Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence seems to be more accurate. This model has been designed to impact teaching second and foreign languages by integrating culture in the learning process of the second language. This model is based on the notion of communicative competence in the function of different sociocultural notions of L1 and L2 (Byram, 1997).

Byram's (1997) model has two parts, the first part consists on three linguistic elements that characterize an intercultural competent second language learner: Linguistic competence, or the ability to use knowledge about language to interact in the L2; sociolinguistic competence, which is the skill of determining meaning in a second language according to the contexts in which and how is produced ; and discourse competence, which is the ability to use different types of strategies to produce texts according to other people's culture standards. (Byram 1997, p. 48)

The second part of Byram's (1997) model highlights five components that are related to the cultural aspects of the intercultural learner's competence. The first component is about

intercultural attitudes, which are the curiosity and receptiveness to re-learn other cultures and a intercultural mindset. The second component is knowledge about oneself and others' social groups in the target language. Byram (1997) also highlighted the importance of skills to interpret and relate different texts from the target culture to L1. The fourth skill is discovery and interaction; this is the ability learners have to learn new knowledge and to use it as interaction demands it with their peers. Finally, the author proposed critical cultural awareness skills, such as the ability to critically think about one's culture and other cultures and societies (Byram et al. 2002, p. 12-13).

Cultural Mapping

Floyd (2009, as cited in LEZakel, 2011) explained language influences the way members of a culture perceive the world. However, it is Edward Sapir (1949), as cited in Kramsch, 1998) and Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956) who took forward the idea that different people speak different because their language allows them to express about the world in alternative ways. Kramsh (1998) explained a crucial perspective of cultural relativity; people are not prisoners of their own culture given by their language, they have the opportunity to enhance and endow one another's culture.

Meyer (2016) explained the importance of cultural relativity in the intercultural communication to understand how one's culture determines how learners and educators may perceive other cultures. These perceptions change depending on who is interacting, the cultural background, and who is the individual is interacting with. Lera Boroditsky (2017) stated that

thanks to language, people are able to transmit ideas and knowledge between one another and language can be changed to suit one's needs.

Meyer (2016) explained the need for decoding the cultures interacting to improve cross-cultural communication; this requires effective relationships between the individuals communicating. Therefore, what it means to be a good listener or a good speaker varies from one culture to another; it is necessary to understand and go beyond what one knows about the other cultures or stereotypes (Meyer, 2016). The author also explained that not to making assumptions about specific characteristics based on the origin of a person is crucial in multicultural groups. Rather, individuals should be aware and understand every person is different. It is also necessary to know more about the cultural background of those interacting (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. 2015).

Meyer (2016) defined three different aspects of culture: perceptions, cognitions, and actions in order to facilitate an understanding of intercultural communication. Meyer also presented a model of eight scales that helps mapping cultures in a group of people:

Communicating: low-context vs. high-context

Evaluating: direct negative feedback vs. indirect negative feedback

Persuading: principles-first vs. applications-first

Leading: egalitarian vs. hierarchical

Deciding: consensual vs. top-down

Trusting: task-based vs. relationship-based

Disagreeing: confrontational vs. avoids confrontation

Scheduling: linear-time vs. flexible-time (p. 21)

Each scale of this model represents a cultural aspect. People who work with others from different cultures should be aware and how they should address communication considering these aspects (Meyer, 2016).

On the other hand, Livermore, D., (2015) proposed ten dimensions of cultural values that can help people have better intercultural communication in linguistically and culturally diverse groups:

Individualism vs. Collectivism

Power Distance

Uncertainty Avoidance

Cooperative vs. Competitive

Short-term vs. Long-term

Direct vs. Indirect context

Being vs. Doing

Universalism vs. Particularism

Neutral vs. Affective

Monochronic vs. Polychronic (pp. 100-131)

This model helps to map cultures in a group by indicating how they vary in the scale of each aspect (Meyer, 2016). Finally, Hofstede, G. J., & Pedersen, P. (2002) explained that the essence of the cultural values remains in only five dimensions of culture: Identity, hierarchy, gender, truth, and virtue. These authors highlighted people learned and develop these cultural dimensions throughout life, they explained the way people resolve these dimensions in the social world defines culture (Hofstede, G. J., & Pedersen, P. 2002, p. 39).

Considering the three scales of cultural dimensions (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. 2015; Meyer, 2016; Hofstede, G. J., & Pedersen, P. 2002) for cultural diverse groups, hereunder, it will be described the cultural dimensions that will lead the development of the of this project.

Low-context vs. high-context

According to Meyer's (2016) scale , cultures that tend to be placed in the *high-context* side have a common factor, history. This may explain the connections that are passed throughout meaningful relationships over time that, at the same time, contribute to the construction of a more "shared context." High-context societies are those that have good and advanced

communication. Such societies tend to have implicit messages that relies on non-verbal language such as tone, and context; not everything is clearly spoken (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. 2015).

On the other hand, the author explained another side of this scale, *low-context cultures*. These cultures tend to have less "shared context," generating that throughout the history of these cultures, people found it necessary to use language, clearly and explicitly expressed to avoid ambiguity. The characteristics of low-context cultures are excellent communication, precise, concise, and clearly stated. Repetition is vital to clarify the message (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. 2015; Meyer, 2016).

Direct negative feedback vs. indirect negative feedback

This dimension helps understand how people from different cultures deal with negative feedback. People in the extreme D*irect Negative Feedback* give negative feedback to other people directly. It is a legitimate negative message that is not nuanced or softened by positive ideas. This type of negative feedback might be given in front of other people or individually. On the other extreme of this scale is *Indirect Negative Feedback*. This side of the scale is the opposite; the message is given softly and in a diplomatically manner. There are positive ideas that wrap up the negative message. People who tend to be on this side of this scale prefer to provide this type of feedback in private (Meyer, 2016, p. 28).

Neutral vs. affective

Meyer's (2016) model included this dimension within the direct feedback vs. indirect feedback, the author explained this was necessary to accurately map the dimension of feedback and how people act and react in this scale. However, Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. (2015) explained this dimension of culture is vital to understand how people express emotions. The authors mentioned that neutral cultures tend to disguise one's thoughts and feelings, even body language and facial expressions are limited. Then elements like silence silence and straight messages are valued (Cools, J., 2017). People on the affective side, tend to be more enthusiastic, they talk loudly and express their emotions and feelings in discussions that can even affect the making-decision process (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G., 2015, p. 127).

Leading: egalitarian vs. hierarchical

Hofstede (2002) included this scale in his Synthetic Culture Profiles under the name of *Hierarchy Dimension*, which explains the respect people have for status, power, and authority. Meyer (2016) calls this cultural dimension *Leading* that seeks to place people according to what they consider the "ideal distance" between them and people in positions of power. In the *Egalitarian* or *Low* side o this dimension, people think the best distance between them and power is low. They also see people in power as facilitators and leaders that communicate directly, avoiding the excess of protocol and may create ways to question or even challenge authority (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. 2015; Meyer, 2016). On the other side,

people in the *Hierarchical* or *High* side tend to think that the distance between power and subordinates has to be high. On this side, status and authority are highly significant; there are fixed structures and protocols to communicate with those in power and vice versa. Besides, those in power are better leaders if they are in control, people do not question authorities and follow the chain of command (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G. 2015, p. 107; Meyer, 2016, p. 104)

Deciding: consensual vs. top-down

This scale is about how people make decisions. On one side, there are consensual people; this means they rely on group decisions. On the other side of the scale, top-down people prefer to make their decisions individually (Meyer, 2016, p. 124).

Trusting: task-based vs. relationship-based

Meyer (2016) explained trusting this scale based on what people consider important in different cultures to trust others. People in the *Task-based* side of the scale, trust other people based on their work and performance in activities they share together, trust can be demonstrated through good work or performance. On the contrary, people in the *Relationship-based* side of the scale, tend to build trust by spending time with others, sharing food, and shared events. They look for long-term relationships (Meyer, 2016, p. 138). However, Hofstede, G. J., & Pedersen, P. (2002) pointed out that for some cultures what is unpredictable and the unknown may cause a wide variety of reactions, but how people cope with the external factors define where they stand in this scale.

Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G., (2015) explained this dimension in terms of cooperative vs. competitive. In the *Cooperative* side, people seek to establish relationships before completing a task and build trust based on caring. While *Competitive* people prioritize task before building a relationship and build trust based on results.

Disagreeing: confrontational vs. avoids confrontation

Meyer (2016) explains how people react when disagreeing with others, those who are in the *Confrontational* spectrum see disagreement as a positive factor that can help organizations grow. They also think disagreeing does not have a negative impact on their relationship with others. People who are placed in the *Avoid-confrontation* side perceive disagreement as a negative element that can break harmony in groups, opening the door to negative impacts in relationships.

The *Disagreeing* scale is composed of a vertical scale that analyzes emotionally expression. The author explains that some cultures are more emotionally expressive than others. *Emotionally Expressive* cultures tend to have people who express passion when speaking; they are also sensitive. While *Emotionally Unexpressive* cultures tend to be more inexpressive and pragmatic (Meyer, 2016, p. 160).

Time: linear-time vs. flexible-time

This scale is about how culture influences the way people perceive time. People in the *Linear-time* or *Monochronic* spectrum tend to follow planned steps to complete a project; each step and task is essential to keep moving forward and to provide feedback to those involved in the collaborative work. They focus on achieving projects according to the deadlines and their schedules. People in the *Linear-time* or *Monochronic* usually have good organization and prioritize promptness and achievement over flexibility. (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G., 2015; Meyer, 2016). On the contrary, people on the spectrum of the *Flexible-time or Polychromic* side approach project steps more fluidly or going with the "flow." Flexibility is over organization, interruptions are not a big issue, and deadliness are less important (Livermore, D., & Soon, A. N. G., 2015; Meyer, 2016).

Chapter Three: Project Design

Communication is a complex and dynamic process that involves the "encoding" and "decoding" of verbal and non-verbal language in the frame of a particular sociocultural environment; these are unique experiences that have previously shaped one's perspective and that affects communication. Communication is also influenced by different dimensions of culture (time, power distance, leadership, conflict resolution, the low or high context in speech, etc.) and it is necessary to gain a better understanding of all elements conjugated in this act, in order to modify the ones necessary to become a better intercultural communicator. This process will also enhance learners' and educators' intercultural communication and their interaction with one another (Jackson, 2014).

Therefore, to have clear goals for learning and teaching culture in the language classroom may be highly beneficial for students and educators. These goals should not be only about trivial aspects of culture; they should focus on important aspects of cultural dimensions in intercultural communication (Alatis, 1995). For every student in a language classroom, Alatis (1995) proposed the following goals:

to move beyond stereotypes and prejudices;

to acquire at least a superficial understanding, but preferably a more in-depth understanding and appreciation, on the target culture in the context of other cultures;

to develop a comprehension of differences and similarities across cultures;

to recognize the essentiality of cultural tolerance, for “an understanding of the way of life [of other cultures] is important to survival in a world of conflicting value systems” (Seely, 1987, p. 14); and

to create a desire to learn more about the culture.

Consequently, educators and learners are encouraged to intentionally work on their intercultural skills within a frame of freedom and mutual respect. This dialogic approach moves away from the traditional paradigms in which teachers teach and learners learn (Hinkel, 2005). Culture must become a common content within EFL/ESL classrooms as it vitalizes language instruction and students’ language learning process. (Hinkel, 2005). Culture allows learners to have the opportunity to have a meaningful context to develop language; there are amounts of authentic artifacts to go through to make the experience of learning second language skills a significant experience (Hinkel, 2005).

The educational needs described above contextualize the development of this project, which strives to guide ESL and EFL learners and educators to understand different dimensions of each others’ cultures. It also looks for the development of the intercultural communicative competences through the cultural awareness and intentional approach of participants to learn about other cultures in the classroom. Hinkel (2005) also suggested that the target culture should be seen in the contexts of all the other cultures interacting in the same environment, to encourage learners to look into their own cultural aspects and recognize similarities and differences among cultures. This experience will allow students to build comprehension about culture and its different dimensions. Damen (1987) explained there are reasons why teachers do not address

culture in the ESL/EFL classroom. One reason is that teachers do not know what and how to teach culture and secondly, there are only a few resources that may assist educators in how to address culture with language learners.

Whereas the intercultural communicative communication is fundamental in a second language process, cultural mapping in the ESL/EFL classroom is a crucial tool to optimize learning a second language (Shankar, P. R. 2017). This project will help participants to understand culturally-relative perspectives that students and educators have about the world and learning a second language. In other words, this project enhances participants' own cultural awareness, including educators' and peers' cultural awareness and cultural awareness about the target language. Mapping culture in the language classroom will also allow all participants to contrast patterns in intercultural communication that they may use to develop communicative strategies and the intercultural communicative competence. The development of ICC this project presents increases cultural intelligence, reducing the range of cross-cultural conflicts in communication. Language teachers will also have the opportunity to use the data from the cultural map to address language skills taking into account cultural dimensions to get ahead of the best way learners interact and use it to maximize their learning experience.

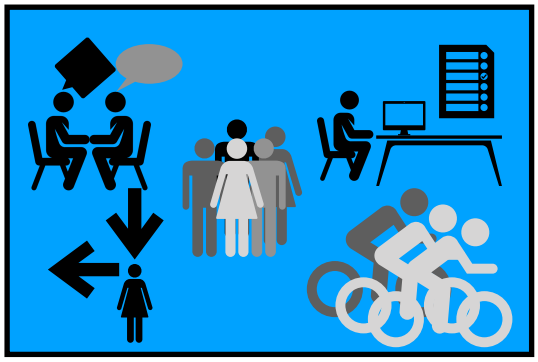
Finally, in the twenty-first century, people must develop intercultural competence to become accountable global citizens. Language learners have the privilege of not only learning a second language but understanding a different perspective and way to perceive the world. Then, this competence is crucial to respect otherness and differences that flourish in the interactions in the language classroom. More importantly, this competence will also become a life tool because

learners and educators will transcend boundaries to interact with culturally and linguistically diverse people for the good of society (Jackson, 2014).

Chapter IV: Cultural Dimension Cards

The following cultural dimension cards are designed to promote and guide intercultural dialogues and interaction in the language classroom. Each of the following cards represents a cultural dimension vital to developing cultural awareness and establishing common expectations, avoiding negative stereotypes and helping language teachers and students to set common and personal goals related to the cultural interactions in a common environment. This tool also enhance the development of the communicative intercultural competence. It is important that participants understand that there is not right or wrong answer or a better cultural perspective.

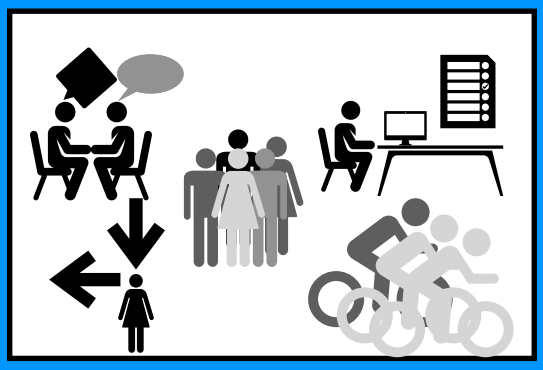
Cultural Dimension Cards



Introduction

The following cultural dimension cards are designed to promote and guide intercultural dialogues and interaction in the language classroom. Each of the following cards represents a cultural dimension vital to developing cultural awareness and intercultural competence in the language classroom.

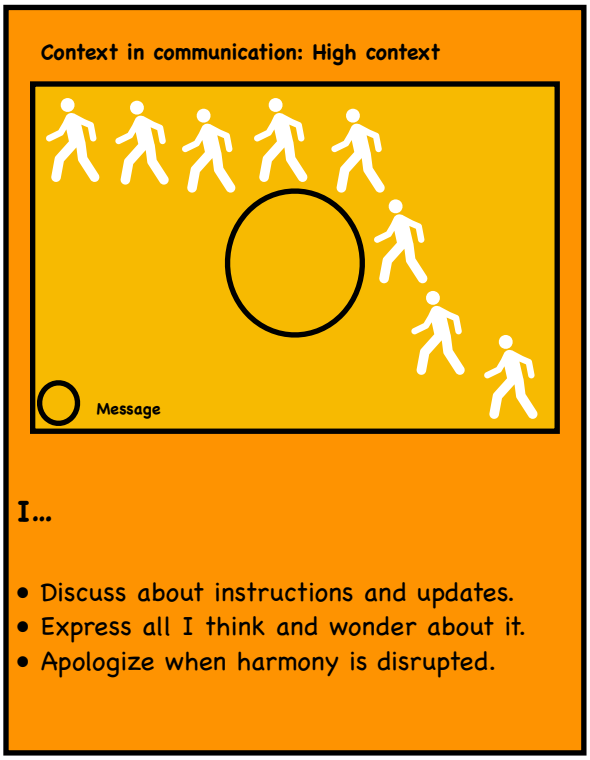
Cultural Dimension Cards

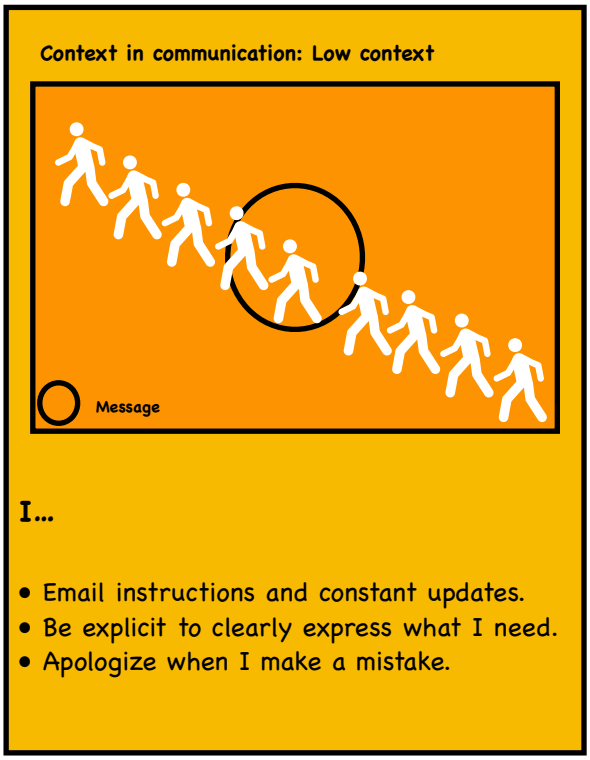


Instructions

- Introduce the cards as a tool to promote cultural awareness in the language classroom.
- Project the cards and examples of how to interact with them.
- Explain there is no right or wrong answer.
- provide the mapping tool and ask students to map their own cultural dimensions.
- Ask them to contrast their data with the classroom data.
- Contrast the target language culture and your classroom culture.
- Create projects around the different cultural dimensions to contrast learners' cultures and the target culture.

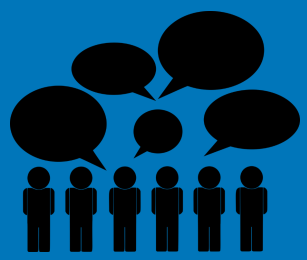
Context in Communication





Feedback Management

Accepting Feedback: Direct Feedback



I...

- Provide feedback directly.
- Provide a legitimate message that is not nuanced by positive ideas.
- Provide feedback when necessary: individually or in from of others.

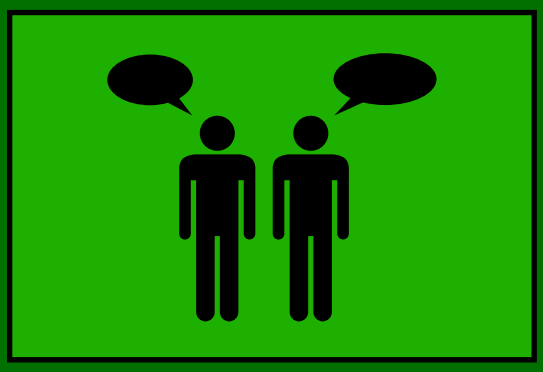
Accepting Feedback: Indirect Feedback

I...

- Provide feedback indirectly.
- Provide a message that is nuanced or softened by positive ideas.
- Provide feedback privately.

Affection in Communication

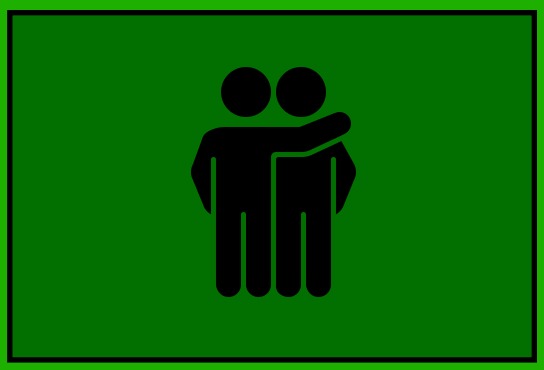
Affection: Neutral



I...

- Control my emotions.
- Control my body language.
- Stick to the point.

Affection: Affective

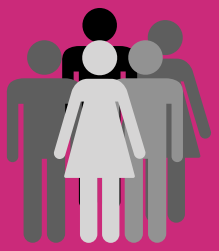


I...

- Be open up to people.
- Demonstrate warmth and trust.
- Work on my expressiveness.

Rapport with Leaders

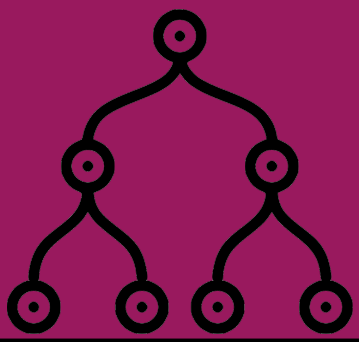
Leading: Low power Distance



I relate to leaders by…

- Forgoing formalities.
- Seeing them as facilitators.
- Questioning them.
- Getting close to them.

Leading: High Power Distance



I relate to leaders by…

- Following protocols.
- Following hierarchy.
- Not questioning them.
- Keeping prudent distance from them.

Making decisions

Making Decisions: Consensual

I make decisions by…

- Listening to other members of a group .
- Taking into account what other think.
- Relying on others.

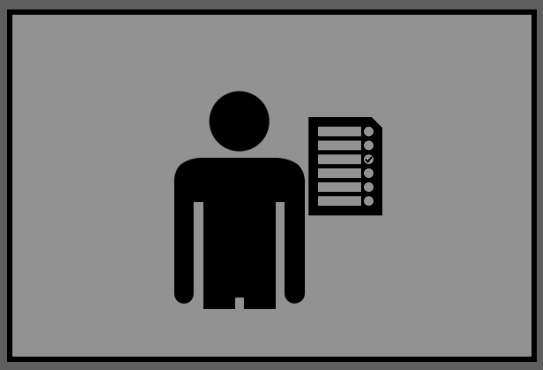
Making Decisions: Top-Down

I make decisions by…

- Considering my own opinion the most important.
- Taking into account what I say vs. what others say
- Relying on my values and beliefs.

Trusting

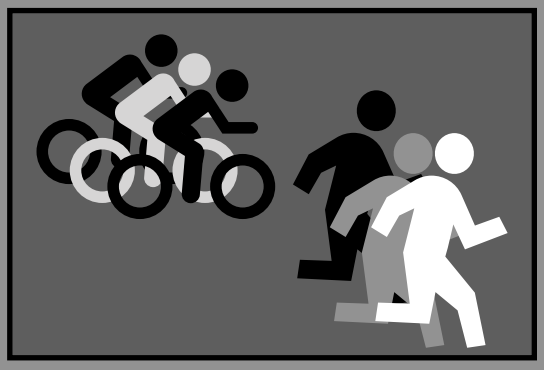
Trusting: Task-based



I trust people when...

- They show interest in tasks in which we work together.
- They accomplish assignments on time.
- They perform well on their assignments.

Trusting: Relationship-based

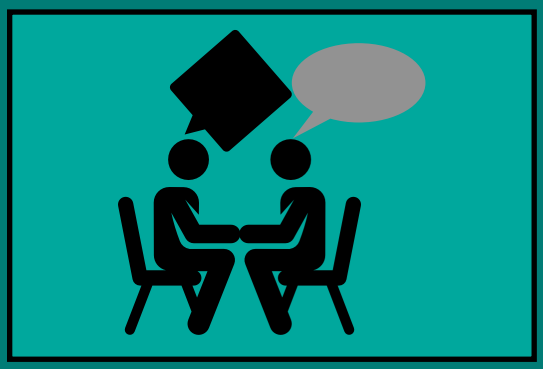


I trust people when...

- We spend time together.
- We have the chance to know each other.
- They show interest in me.

Disagreeing

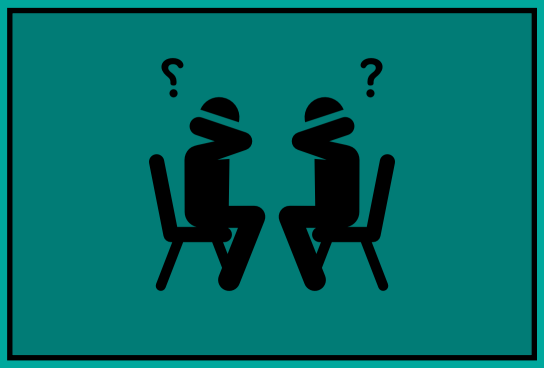
Disagreeing: Confrontational



Disagreeing...

- Allows people growing.
- Allows organizations work better.
- Should not affect relationships.

Disagreeing: Avoid-confrontation



Disagreeing...

- Breaks harmony.
- Affects negatively organizations.
- Affects negatively relationships.

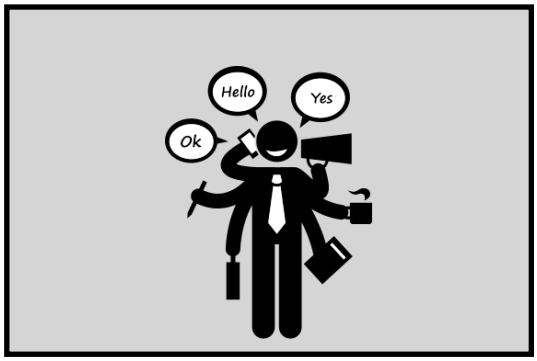
Time

Time: Linear

I..

- Plan every step to develop a project.
- Follow and execute each step planned.
- Achieve projects within deadlines.

Time: Flexible



I..

- Go with the flow.
- Am more flexible when things come up.
- Propose an alternative deadline when necessary.

Achieving Goals

Achieving Goals: Long Term

I..

- Focus on the future.
- Can delay social interaction and gratification to prepare for the future.
- Persistent, perseverance and saving are important to achieve goals.

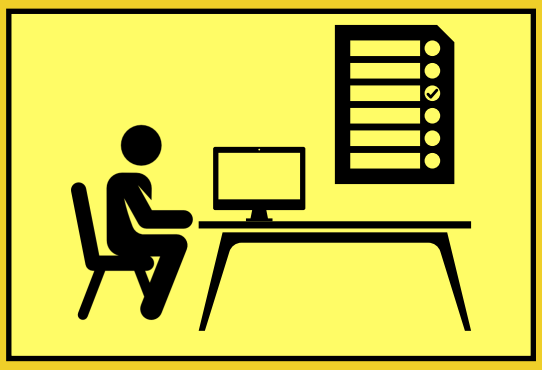
Achieving Goals: Short Term

I..

- Consider present or past are more important than the future.
- Tradition and social obligations are important to me.
- Prefer immediate gratification.

Life Management

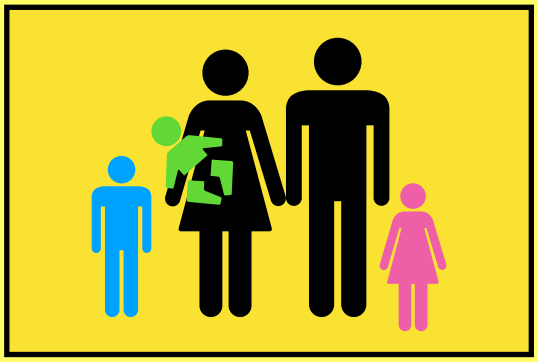
Life Management: Doing



I..

- Prefer to set goals and work hard now so I can have a better future.
- Look for economic stability first to enjoy relationships later.
- Can put apart what's necessary to achieve goals.

Life Management: Being



I..

- Prefer spend time with family and friends every day.
- Focus on the needs and duties I have in the present.
- Can

Interpreting results

In the following table teachers should collect all the data in terms of percentages to indicate what learners pointed out in each cultural dimension, it is important that teachers can participate and be part of the intercultu

Classroom Culture		
	High Context	**Low Context**
Context in Communication		
	Direct	**Indirect**
Feedback Management		
	Neutral	**Affective**
Affection in Communication		
	Low Power Distance	**High Power Distance**
Rapport with Leaders		
	Consesual	**Top-down**
Making Decisions		
	Task-based	**Relation-based**
Trusting		
	Linear	**Flexible**
Time		
	Short Term	**Long Term**
Achieving Goals		
	Doing	**Being**
Life Management		
To consider:		

ral interaction. With this information teachers will have a panorama of how their learners

behave in each of this cultural dimension and would be able to set classroom contracts and course expectations by including or considering each dimension.

Example: Classroom Culture		
	High Context	**Low Context**
Context in Communication	48 %	52 %
	Direct	**Indirect**
Feedback Management	78 %	22 %
	Neutral	**Affective**
Affection in Communication	63 %	37 %
	Low Power Distance	**High Power Distance**
Rapport with Leaders	20 %	80 %
	Consesual	**Top-down**
Making Decisions	18 %	82 %
	Task-based	**Relation-based**
Trusting	75 %	25 %
	Confrontational	**Avoid Confrontation**
Disagreeing	65 %	35 %
	Linear	**Flexible**
Time	90 %	10 %
	Short Term	**Long Term**
Achieving Goals	83 %	17 %
	Doing	**Being**
Life Management	74 %	26 %

Example: Classroom Culture
To consider: My language classroom seems to manage projects within deadlines and specific times. Probably, they want to get closer to me as a teacher, however it might be difficult for some of them to build relationships between while some small groups may emerge.

Mapping Tool: Culture 1 and Culture 2

This tool helps learners and teachers to map their culture according to what they answer in each cultural dimension in contrast to the classroom cultural data. This mapping will help participants to set clear goals according what they consider they need to work in order to interact better with others in the language classroom.

Culture 1	Culture 2
Context in Communication	
High Context	**Low Context**
Feedback Management	
Direct Feedback	**Indirect Feedback**
Affection in Communication	
Neutral	**Affective**
Rapport with Leaders	
High Power Distance	**Low Power Distance**
Making Decisions	
Consensual	**Top-Down**

Trusting

Task-Based	**Relationship-Based**

Disagreeing

Confrontational	**Avoid Confrontation**

Time

Linear	**Flexible**

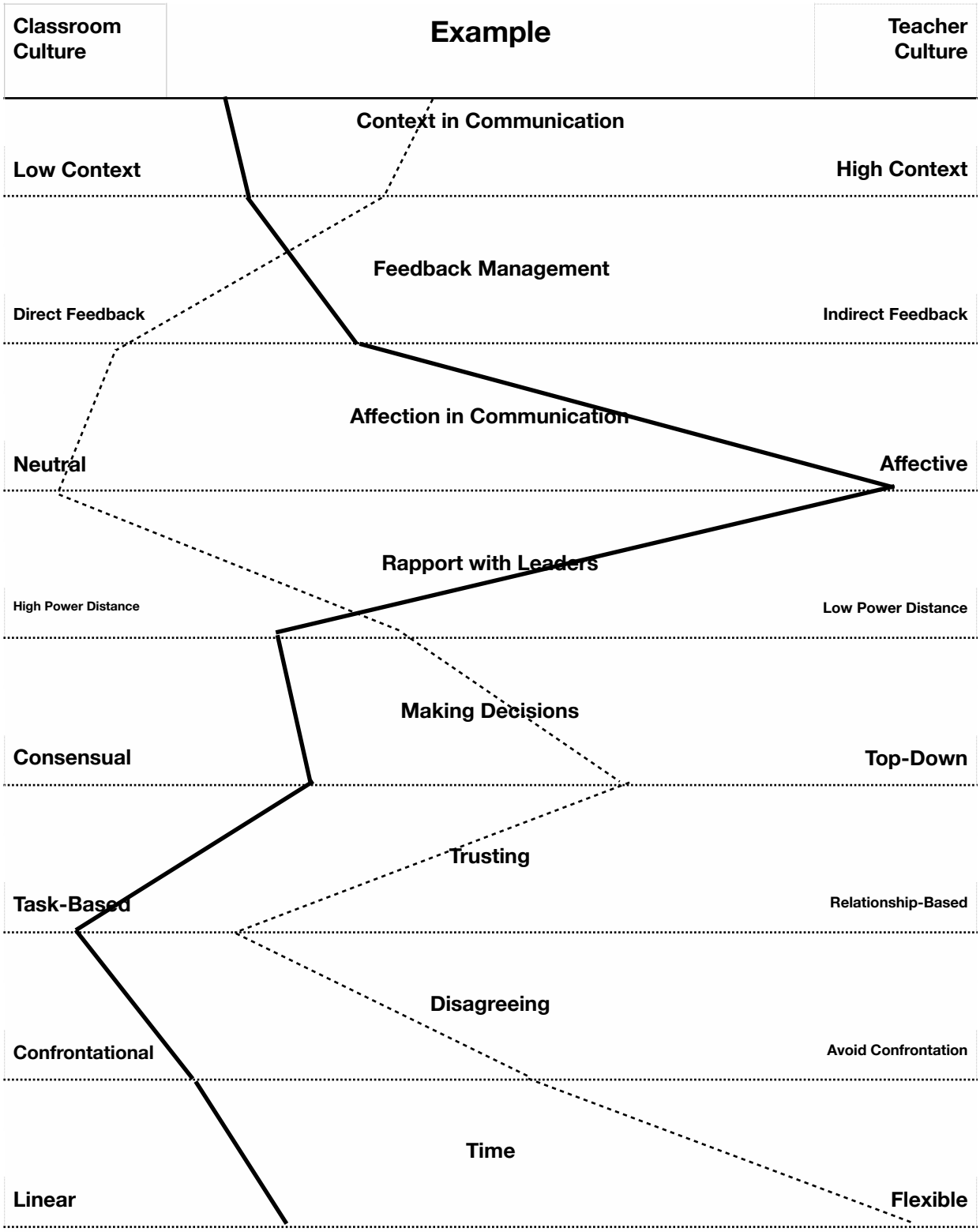
Achieving Goals

Short-Term	**Long-Term**

Life Management

Doing	**Being**
Goal 1	
Goal 2	
Goal 3	

In the example bellow I analyzed the classroom culture vs. the teacher culture. This provides a better understanding and awareness where the cultural gap is according to each dimension. This map also allows teachers to set clear personal goals to close the gap by understanding how their learners behave and think in order to have better interaction and communication with them. The goals at the bottom of the map should been written in terms of of intention and desire.


Classroom Culture
Example
Teacher Culture
Context in Communication
Low Context
High Context
Feedback Management
Direct Feedback
Indirect Feedback
Affection in Communication
Neutral
Affective
Rapport with Leaders
High Power Distance
Low Power Distance
Making Decisions
Consensual
Top-Down
Trusting
Task-Based
Relationship-Based
Disagreeing
Confrontational
Avoid Confrontation
Time
Linear
Flexible

	Achieving Goals	
Short-Term		**Long-Term**
	Life Management	
Doing		**Being**
Goal 1: I would like to understand how my students manage projects in a short-term period of time.		
Goal 2: I would like to appreciate my students affection in communication.		
Goal 3: I would understand if my students have questions about my role as a teacher.		

Bridging Tool

This tool complements the cards, it allows individuals interacting with the cards to register what they can analyze about their own cultural dimensions. This tool was designed to be used to make two cultures interact whether are two learners interacting or teachers and students analyzing a target culture with other cultures in the language classroom. At each end of the tool there are two different sides of the same cultural dimension. People using the tool will mark how each culture behaves by coloring each cell according to the color that represent each side on the scale, the more participant get closer to one of the sides the color will be lighter or darker depending on each dimension. They will need to choose a different row to mark on each dimension.

Culture 1 _____		**Culture 2** _____
Context in Communication		

High Context					Low Context
Feedback Management					
Direct Feedback					Indirect Feedback
Affection in Communication					
Neutral					Affective
Rapport with Leaders					
High Power Distance					Low Power Distance
Making Decisions					
Consensual					Top-Down
Trusting					
Task-Based					Relationship-Based
Disagreeing					
Confrontational					Avoid Confrontation
Time					
Linear					Flexible
Achieving Goals					
Short-Term					Long-Term

Life Management					
Doing					Being
What are 3 things I can learn from my peer?					

The following example is a hypothetical interaction between two students, in it we can observe how both identify their cultural dimensions differently.

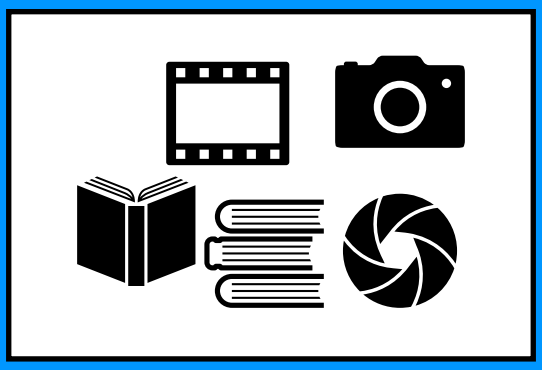
Student 1					Student 2
Context in Communication					
High Context					Low Context
Feedback Management					
Direct Feedback					Indirect Feedback
Affection in Communication					
Neutral					Affective
Rapport with Leaders					
High Power Distance					Low Power Distance
Making Decisions					

Consensual					Top-Down
Trusting					
Task-Based					Relationship-Based
Disagreeing					
Confrontational					Avoid Confrontation
Time					
Linear					Flexible
Achieving Goals					
Short-Term					Long-Term
Life Management					
Doing					Being

What are 3 things I can learn from my peer?
My classmate seems to be more direct when providing feedback without expressing much feelings. I understand it is important for him I can accomplish with my duties when working on groups.

Cultural presentations

Cultural Dimension Cards



Cultural Presentations: Instructions

- Explain to the learners they will research about about the language target culture.
- Assign each cultural dimension to a group of students.
- Provide the cards of that cultural dimension.
- Ask learners to turn statements into questions.
- Explain learners they will use these questions to lead their research.
- Students build a presentation.
- They contrast that specific dimension with the culture in the classroom.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Learning a second language is a process that requires the development of all types of skills and not only language competences. Learners should learn how to use that new language and learn what speakers from that new language expect from them in communication. Furthermore, learners need to be aware they are an asset in the language classroom with the potential to contribute their knowledge and culture to the language learning process. On the other hand, teachers need to have tools to know what to do with all the intercultural exchange that continuously happens in one way or another. Their intervention is vital to promote adequate spaces and guidance so that these kinds of intercultural interactions may enrich learners and the language classroom in general.

This project points out how crucial it is to help learners in their interaction with peers from other cultures and the target language culture. When a person decides to learn another language, he starts an intercultural dialogue with a different culture. This process requires openness and disposition, not only to learn how to see and perceive things differently but to reflect on one's own culture. For this reason, language teachers should consider the development of cultural awareness and the development of intercultural communicative competence as one of the priorities in the language classroom.

The main purpose of this project is to build bridges and bring walls and any barrier down between cultures. Cultures provide unique ways to perceive the world; to think that one's perspective of the world is the "correct" way to understand and manage cultural dimensions is

one of the biggest barriers to overcome. However, language learners are people who in many ways are willing to build cultural bridges between the target culture and other cultures.

I expect this project can contribute to ESL teachers, ELLs, and general language teachers and learners in the development of cultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence. I also expect these cultural dimension cards can promote intercultural dialogues through the different dimensions that each card focuses on. These dimensions may seem to be simple life areas, but they are crucial for effective communication; to reflect on how people from different cultures, and even from the same culture, coincide or differ in these cultural dimensions is important; managing time, providing feedback, managing emotions in communication, approaching to leadership, using context in communication, investing time in work or relationships.

In my experience, being exposed to another language might be as exciting as overwhelming. This project allowed me to reflect upon and address different aspects of culture I have lived as an educator of a second language and as a person who has traveled and who currently lives abroad. I also wanted to create a more concise product in which I could settle the theories upon which this project is based; I found the cards are a concrete tool for teachers and learners to interact.

I expect teachers might find in these cards a valuable tool to guide learners in the developmental process of cultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence. I also expect that teachers can use these cards to help learners set goals related to their interaction with other cultures in order to grow personally and to strengthen English language skills. These cards

were also designed to compare the language target culture with other cultures to understand the cultural gap and to have clear goals to close any kind of breach when interacting.

On the other hand, interculturalism is a common field of study in business and it has had great developments. However, intercultural dialogues in the language classroom is a field of study that has great potential and needs to be continuously explored by educators and researchers. Educators and learners need more tools that can guide them into intentional intercultural dialogues; spaces where they can talk about their view of the world and where they can learn from each other. Education needs to provide the tools to overcome stereotypes and prejudices about what is different and what one does not know so that people can change fear for curiosity and openness to learn and enrich one another.

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